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United States Senate
WASHINGTON, DC 20510

How Much is Auto Insurance Fraud Costing New York Drivers?

US Senator Charles E Schumer today introduced the Cheaper Car Insurance Act of 2004 to help crack down on auto insurance fraud that is driving up the price of auto insurance for New York drivers. According to the Insurance Information Institute, the average New Yorker is paying $60 per vehicle to defray the cost of staged accidents and other insurance scams for insurers. Last year, New York insurance premiums were the second highest in the nation at an average of $1,186 for car insurance including personal injury coverage per vehicle. Schumer's proposal would increase federal and state investigative opportunities and impose stiff penalties of up to 15 years of jail time for con artists who commit auto insurance fraud.

The following report details the county-by-county cost to New York drivers of inflated auto insurance premiums due to these scams. NOTE: These figures are estimates and assume that all drivers pay the state average to insure their vehicles.

Capital Region: In the Capital Region, auto insurance fraud costs drivers $37 million a year in inflated premiums to insure 617,000 cars.

County	Registered Cars	Added Cost Due to Auto Insurance Fraud
Albany	173,712	$10.4 million
Fulton	32,230	$1.9 million
Montgomery	29,870	$1.8 million
Rensselaer	92,223	$5.5 million
Saratoga	136,263	$8.2 million
Schenectady	97,320	$5.8 million
Schoharie	20,680	$1.2 million
Washington	34,261	$2.1 million
Capital Region Total	**616,559**	**$37 million**

Central New York: In Central New York, auto insurance fraud costs drivers $31.5 million a year in inflated premiums to insure 526,000 cars.

County	Registered Cars	Added Cost Due to Auto Insurance Fraud
Cortland	25,526	$1.5 million
Madison	37,812	$2.3 million
Oneida	129,610	$7.8 million
Onondaga	266,748	$16 million
Oswego	66,136	$4 million
Central New York Total	**525,832**	**$31.5 million**

Rochester/Finger Lakes: In Rochester/Finger Lakes, auto insurance fraud costs drivers $44.4 million a year in inflated premiums to insure 740,000 cars.

County	Registered Cars	Added Cost Due to Auto Insurance Fraud
Cayuga	42,961	$2.6 million
Livingston	36,601	$2.2 million
Monroe	448,462	$26.9 million
Ontario	62,413	$3.7 million
Schuyler	11,130	$668,000
Seneca	19,234	$1.2 million
Tompkins	49,042	$2.9 million
Wayne	57,105	$3.4 million
Yates	13,180	$791,000
Rochester/ Finger Lakes Total	**740,128**	**$44.4 million**

Hudson Valley: In the Hudson Valley, auto insurance fraud costs drivers $93.4 million a year in inflated premiums to insure 1.5 million cars.

County	Registered Cars	Added Cost Due to Auto Insurance Fraud
Columbia	43,918	$2.6 million
Dutchess	203,212	$12.2 million
Greene	34,788	$2.1 million
Orange	229,759	$13.8 million
Putnam	79,138	$4.7 million
Rockland	193,061	$11.6 million
Sullivan	50,934	$3.1 million
Ulster	122,470	$7.3 million
Westchester	599,381	$36 million
Hudson Valley Total	**1,556,661**	**$93.4 million**

North Country: In the North Country, auto insurance fraud costs drivers $17.8 million a year in inflated premiums to insure 297,000 cars.

County	Registered Cars	Added Cost Due to Auto Insurance Fraud
Clinton	45,956	$2.8 million
Essex	22,478	$1.3 million
Franklin	25,901	$1.6 million
Hamilton	3,708	$222,000
Herkimer	34,432	$2.1 million
Jefferson	54,105	$3.2 million
Lewis	13,598	$816,000
Saint Lawrence	54,604	$3.3 million
Warren	42,085	$2.5 million
North Country Total	**296,867**	**$17.8 million**

Southern Tier: In the Southern Tier, auto insurance fraud costs drivers $23.1 million a year in inflated premiums to insure 385,000 cars.

County	Registered Cars	Added Cost Due to Auto Insurance Fraud
Allegany	24,121	$1.4 million
Broome	121,223	$7.3 million
Chemung	52,166	$3.1 million
Chenango	30,226	$1.8 million
Delaware	32,794	$2 million
Otsego	35,881	$2.2 million
Steuben	57,038	$3.4 million
Tioga	31,173	$1.9 million
Southern Tier Total	**384,622**	**$23.1 million**

Western New York: In Western New York, auto insurance fraud costs drivers $51.9 million a year in inflated premiums to insure 865,000 cars.

County	Registered Cars	Added Cost Due to Auto Insurance Fraud
Cattaraugus	43,231	$2.6 million
Chautauqua	75,203	$4.5 million
Erie	535,101	$32.1 million
Genesee	35,142	$2.1 million
Niagara	130,590	$7.8 million
Orleans	23,770	$1.4 million
Wyoming	21,991	$1.3 million
Western New York Total	**865,028**	**$51.9 million**

Source: Schumer estimates based on March 2003 data from the Insurance Information Institute and vehicle registration data from the New York State Department of Motor Vehicles.